

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 12 and 17 without prejudice and substitute for corresponding pending claims the claims as shown rewritten below with amendments effected therein. Appendix I is attached hereto having marked versions of said claims with amendments indicated by brackets and underlining.

1. (Amended) A video game device for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

 a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for changing a size of a mark, said size of said mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

 a command guiding unit for guiding a command input for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty,

 an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

 a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit, and

a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to set the size of said mark in response to operations of said second operable member performed by the game player within a predetermined time period;

an evaluating unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member.

11. (Amended) A technique setting method for setting a technique in a video game for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance by operating an operation unit, the method comprising the steps of:

setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

changing a size of a mark in a manner corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member; and

A2 setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period.

A3 16. (Amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a technique setting program in a video game for displaying a play character in a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty and prepared in advance by operating an operation unit, the technique setting program comprising the steps of:

setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character;

changing a size of a mark in a manner corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

guiding an inputting operation of a command for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty;

evaluating the technique performed by inputting the command in accordance with the guide through operation of a first operable member; and

setting the size of said mark in response to operations of a second operable member by the game player within a predetermined time period.

Please add the following claims.

--26. A video game device for displaying a play character on a game screen image displayed on a monitor and causing the play character to perform a plurality of techniques having different degrees of difficulty, comprising:

a degree of difficulty setting unit for setting a degree of difficulty of a technique to be performed by the play character, said degree of difficulty setting unit including a mark changing unit for automatically increasing a size of a mark, said size of said mark corresponding to the degree of difficulty of the technique;

a command guiding unit for guiding a command input for causing the play character to perform a technique corresponding to the set degree of difficulty,

an operation unit for causing the play character to perform the technique according to the set degree of difficulty, the operation unit including:

a first operable member for inputting the command in accordance with the command input guide given by the command guiding unit, and

a second operable member, operated by a game player, for causing said mark changing unit to stop increasing the size of said mark in response to operation of said second operable member performed by the game player;

an evaluating unit for evaluating the technique performed in accordance with a command given by the first operable member.

27. The video game device according to claim 1, wherein said mark changing unit changes the size of the mark in accordance with the number of operations of the second operable member performed by the game player within the predetermined time period.

28. The video game device according to claim 27, wherein said size of the mark grows as the number of operations of the second operable member increases and said command guiding unit displays on the game screen image a series of command inputs to be sequentially followed by the game player for the player character to perform a technique in accordance with the size of the mark.

29. The video game device according to claim 27, wherein said second operable member is comprised of two operable buttons and the degree of difficulty of the technique to be performed by the player character is increased as the number of alternative on-and-off operations of the two operable buttons increases within the predetermined time period.—

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please replace the abstract with the substitute abstract submitted on the following separate page.